



# WILDERNESS IS OUR COMMON GROUND

I've lived in Central Oregon for more than 35 years, and have served as both the mayor of Sisters and as a Deschutes County Commissioner. I understand competing needs, balancing development with protection of some of our quiet, green open spaces. But I can't imagine what Bend would be like if our leaders had not had the foresight to preserve Drake Park while our community was just starting to grow. Protecting the Badlands—the high desert gem in our backyard— just makes good sense. Wilderness areas help boost the local economy, and offer the chance to get away from the rush of our daily lives. And the way Bend is growing, it's important that we protect the Badlands while we still have the chance. We save things for our children and grandchildren that reflect values—special family heirlooms, photographs of loved ones, money in college funds. The legacy of the precious Badlands is a worthy addition to this list.

*Photo: Linda Swearingen, consultant, Bend, Ore; Photo: Ben Moon*

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